

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Oquirrh School

other name/site number Oquirrh Place

2. Location

street name 350 South 400 East ☐ not for publication

city or town Salt Lake City ☐ vicinity

state Utah code UT county Salt Lake code 035 zip code 84111

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

Utah Division of State History, Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the
National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National
Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:) _____

Oquirrh School
Name of Property

Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah
City, County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

buildings

sites

structures

objects

1

0

Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/schools = schoolhouse

Current Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: professional

WORK IN PROGRESS

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

LATE VICTORIAN: Renaissance/Second Renaissance Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

STONE: limestone

roof SYNTHETICS

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

8. Description

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1894-1958

Significant Dates

1894, c.1902

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Kletting, Richard K. A.

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☒ Other Name of repository:

Utah State Historical Society

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Oquirrh School
Name of Property

Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah
City, County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6 acre(s)

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

A 1/2 4/2/5/7/8/0 4/5/1/2/4/8/0
Zone Easting Northing

B / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

C / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

D / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Commence at southeast corner Lot 8, Block 36, Plat "B", Salt Lake City Survey, west 25 rods; north 5 rods; east 5 rods; north 5 rods; east 20 rods; south 10 rods to beginning.

Property Tax No. 1606401010

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are those that have been historically associated with the building.

☐ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Oliver, Principal
organization Oliver Conservation Group date September 11, 2008
street & number 771 5th Avenue telephone (801) 532-0394
city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84103

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name/title Children's Center
street & number 1855 Medical Drive telephone (801) 582-5534
city or town Salt Lake City state UT zip code 84112

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Narrative Description

In 1894, the Oquirrh School was built just east of downtown Salt Lake City at 350 South 400 East, near the center of what was once a residential block face. Today it stands among mature tall shade trees, with a lawn on the east side and a large, paved parking lot on the west side that can be approached by a narrow driveway along the north side of the building. It remains on the outskirts of downtown, but the surrounding residences (and a church building to the north) have been mostly converted to light commercial use or demolished. The imposing, 3½-story building has a high basement story, and is constructed of unreinforced brick masonry walls that rise from a low, unobtrusive concrete foundation. Limestone, concrete, and brick bands are used to articulate the floor levels and ornament the door and window openings. In plan, the building is essentially cross-shaped, with the arms of the cross filled to create a rectangular mass with complicated articulation on all facades; the plan is roughly symmetrical across the diagonal axis (i.e., across a line extending from the northeast to the southwest corners of the building). The primary façade faces east; it is asymmetrical and features a projecting, four-story, hip-roofed entrance bay flanked by a small, rectangular, four-story tower to the north. Projecting cross wings on the secondary elevations have gable roofs with fully-pedimented gable ends. The entrances on the east and west elevations are approached by stairs that lead under stone arches and into sheltered entries with wood-paneled ceilings. A hierarchy of window treatments is employed, ranging from unadorned, rectangular, stone lintels in the basement story to arched, gauged brick lintels in the top story. The double-hung wooden windows consist primarily of one-over-one or three-over-three glazing; Palladian windows are employed in the attic stories of the gable ends. On the exterior, the building is in excellent condition and retains a very high degree of architectural integrity; the interior has been heavily remodeled, but the east and west entries and the original brick bearing walls are largely intact.

The Oquirrh School combines elements of several late Victorian architectural styles, mainly Romanesque and Second Renaissance Revival. Its eclectic style is typical of Utah schools constructed in the latter part of the 19th century. Specific Romanesque influences include asymmetry; use of multiple material colors and textures on the exterior; wide, rounded stone arches springing from heavy piers that mark the main entrances; the vestiges of towers on the east and west elevations; and fully pedimented gable ends punctuated by Palladian windows. But the Romanesque is somewhat subdued by the elements of Renaissance Revival that lend the building a more modern appearance; these elements include the low, hipped roofs, wide eaves, and brackets; non-rusticated wall surfaces; simplified massing; and relatively uniform window treatments.

Exterior

The principal east façade is divided into four bays: two identical bays (with the exception of the roof treatments) on the north and south ends; a projecting south central bay which forms the primary entrance and displays the most elaborate treatment; and a small, attached tower set into the corner between the projecting bay and the north bay. A two story addition dating to the period between 1898 and 1903 projects from the south side of the

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Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

building and forms part of the east elevation, although set well back from the main façade.¹ The following descriptions pertain to the north and south bays and the attached tower; the entrance bay is significantly different and is described separately.

The poured concrete foundation on the east elevation is very low and extends to the sills of the basement (ground level) windows. The concrete has been scored to imitate stone masonry, and the color and texture of the concrete match the limestone trim used elsewhere on the building. The foundation is surmounted by a high basement story composed of brick walls laid in American bond; the original mortar joint is struck, with no drip. The basement walls are capped by a limestone water table; the mortar color matches the limestone and the fine joints are raised and beaded. The rectangular, wooden, double-hung windows on the basement level are primarily composed of three vertical panes over three vertical panes of clear glazing; the exceptions are the two narrow, one over one windows in the attached tower. The original window openings in the south addition have been filled with glass block. The windowsills are formed by the concrete foundation and the lintels are formed by the limestone water table.

The first-story walls are composed of brick and mortar identical to the basement level but are articulated with projecting belt courses of brick at the levels of the windowsills, transoms, and lintels; this articulation is confined to the windowsill level on the south addition. The double-hung, one-over-one wooden windows are rectangular and are surmounted by rectangular transoms; very narrow versions of the same windows are used in the attached tower. The windowsills are of poured concrete and the lintels are of smoothly dressed limestone. On the south addition, the window lintels are formed by a continuous band of poured concrete; the window openings are filled with glass block and the sills are covered with metal.

The second-story walls are similar to the first-story walls; the greatest differences are around the window heads. The double-hung, one-over-one wooden windows are capped with arched transoms beneath gauged brick arches, and the arches are further accented by courses of raised brickwork. A simple frieze beneath the eaves is formed by raised courses of bricks and brick pendants.

The projecting entrance bay is similar in overall composition to the rest of the east elevation but differs in the details. The interior staircase is contained behind the projecting bay and the entrance and windows are level with the stair landings rather than the floor levels, thus the fenestration is offset from the rest of the façade by a half story. The basement story is of smoothly-dressed limestone blocks with narrow, beaded mortar joints; it supports the heavy limestone entrance arch that springs from two delicately carved blocks. Two carved limestone roundels bear the school's construction date and the name of the school is carved in raised letters above these, flanked by *fleurs de lis*. A limestone cornice with carved dentils caps the entrance. The sheltered interior of the entrance has ceramic tile stairs, limestone and brick walls, and a paneled wooden ceiling. The upper portion of the entrance bay is of brick, and bricks are used to form stepped pilasters between the windows; the pilasters terminate in round arches similar to the arched window heads of the other bays. The double-hung, wooden windows on the lowest level are one-over-one, with a smaller upper sash. The windows

¹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1898; Shipler Photograph Collection, Photograph no. 22839 (1903), Utah State Historical Society.

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on the middle level are also one-over-one double-hung but with equally sized sashes, while the equally sized, one-over-one double-hung windows on the top level are surmounted with an arched, glazed transom. Windowsills are of poured concrete and the lintels are of smoothly dressed limestone. The frieze and cornice treatment is the same as that described for the other east bays.

Hipped roofs cover the south bay, the entrance bay, and the attached tower, while gable roofs cover the north bay and the south addition; the roof covering is asphalt shingle. Built-in gutters and exposed downspouts drain the roofs. Wide eaves are supported by modillions, and all of the eave elements appear to be painted metal. A very plain eave is used on the south addition. Matching shingled dormers with very wide wooden eaves punctuate the roofs of the north and south bays. The north dormer is lit by a single-pane window and an air conditioning unit fills the south dormer window. A low, unobtrusive skylight has replaced the southeast corner of the hip roof on the south bay.

The east elevation is in very good condition and the alterations made over time have not significantly impacted the building's integrity. Most of the major alterations pertain to the south addition, and include the replacement of limestone lintels with a continuous band of poured or pre-cast concrete, the removal of the brick chimney from the south end, the alteration of the original secondary entrance in the corner between the south addition and the main building, the lowering of the addition roof to lintel height (all prior to 1965, probably c. 1954), and the removal of original glazing and replacement with glass block after 1965 (probably in the mid-1970s). Alterations to the original building include the removal of diamond mesh gratings from the basement windows (visible in c. 1900), and the removal of the upper courses of brick between the basement windows, just below the water table, and their replacement with projecting concrete drip courses (between 1903 and 1965).² Other undated alterations that predate 1965 include the replacement of the wood shingle roof with asphalt shingle, the removal of metal ridges on hip-roof junctures, the removal of metal ball finials from the apices of the hip roofs, and the removal of the tall flagpole from the apex of the entrance bay hip roof. Alterations that probably occurred when the building was renovated in the mid 1970s include the replacement of the original front doors, the replacement of the (probably sandstone) sheltered entrance stairs with tile, and the addition of skylights in the roof.

The north elevation is composed of five stepped bays of varying width; foundation, wall, and window treatments are identical to those on the north and south bays of the east elevation. The basement level can be accessed through two doors (on the first and third bays respectively). The three-paneled wooden doors, set in paneled casings, are glazed and were originally surmounted by glazed transoms (now boarded).

The cornice and roof treatments on the second bay from the east are identical to those on the east elevation. In contrast, the first and third bays, which project the furthest to the north, are gable-end walls capped with closed pediments. Palladian windows in the attic levels of the gables have cast concrete sills and flat limestone lintels on the flanking windows; the central windows have arched heads of gauged brick. The eaves of the fourth and fifth bays are similar to the others but modillions are only used at the corners rather than along the length of the

² C-400, Photograph no. 17958 (1965); uncataloged, large format, framed print (c. 1900); and Shipler Photograph Collection, Photograph no. 22839 (1903), Utah State Historical Society.

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Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

eaves. A wide, corbelled brick chimney projects from the roof above the fourth bay; its height has been doubled by the addition of a plain, rectangular, concrete-capped brick stack. A wood and glass dormer projects from the hip roof of the fifth bay.

A one-story, flat-roofed brick utility room occupies the basement-level corner formed by the third (projecting) and fourth (more recessed) bays and is original to the building. The single window on the north elevation has been filled with brick. Another small, one-story, flat-roofed, basement-level room was added in the corner between the second and third bays; it is of brick with a flat concrete roof and a single large, louvered vent on the north elevation. This room may have been added in about 1954 when a new heating system was installed.

Significant alterations on the north elevation include the bricking in of the window on the north elevation of the original one-story utility room (date of alteration uncertain), the addition of the smaller utility room to the east and the addition of a brick stack on top of the original chimney (probably c. 1954), and the addition of a dormer at the western end of the roof (probably in the 1970s when the attic story was converted into offices).

The four-bayed west elevation is a simplified version of the east elevation. Foundation, wall, window and roof treatments are generally identical on the north and south bays, but there are no dormers. The attached tower to the south of the projecting entrance bay is a solid brick wall relieved only by brick stringcourses, unlike the elaborately fenestrated tower on the east elevation. The 3½ story entrance bay has an arched limestone opening leading to sheltered stairs and double entry doors; the basement walls beneath the limestone water table are brick. Above the arch are two courses of double-hung wooden windows without transoms; all windows have cast concrete sills and smoothly dressed limestone lintels. The attic level of the entrance bay is a gable end with a closed pediment and a Palladian window like those on the north and south elevations. In the 1970s, a metal elevator shaft was built into the corner between the north bay and the projecting entrance bay; this is the only major alteration on the west elevation, aside from the replacement of the original double entry doors and the replacement of the (probably sandstone) sheltered entrance stairs with tile (also 1970s).

The south elevation is a mirror image of the north elevation, with five stepped bays and pedimented gable ends on the first and third bays from the west. Foundation, wall, window, and roof treatments are generally identical to the north elevation. Significant alterations on this elevation were made between c. 1898-1903 and include the construction of the two-story addition against the base of the fourth bay from the west and the shortening of two windows on the third story to accommodate the original gable roof of the addition. The addition itself has been altered extensively through the years; this is discussed in connection with the east elevation.

As part of the current renovation, the brick mortar will be matched to allow for the very minimal amount of repointing required. The limestone foundation and decorative elements will be patched and repaired as needed. The elevator shaft has been removed from the south elevation (to be replaced with an ADA-compliant interior elevator) and damaged or missing brick repaired or replaced with matching brick. All window sashes will be removed and replaced with wooden replicas with insulated glazing; the original wooden frames and casings will be retained. The non-historic tiled floors and stairs of the east and west entries will be removed and replaced with stone, with porcelain tile as a secondary finish material. All exterior surface-mounted conduits, security

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cameras, and non-historic light fixtures will be removed. On the south (restroom) addition, the glass block windows will be removed and replaced with wooden windows to match the originals; glazing will be opaque. The roof will be restored to its original height and pitch and clad in asphalt shingles; the original fascia and integral gutter will also be replicated. Work is being completed based on compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation in order to qualify for federal tax credits.

Interior

The interior of the building was extensively altered in the mid-1970s, when the school was adapted for use as office space. Original plaster was removed to expose the brick bearing walls. Much of the wooden wainscoting was also removed, but wooden doors, baseboards, and trim were retained and sandblasted. The original open spaces of the classrooms and halls were extensively subdivided with glass, wood, and drywall partitions to create separate office suites; dropped ceilings were also installed. The tiled floors and wood-paneled ceilings of the east and west entries were retained, making these areas the most intact original spaces in the building.

As part of the current renovation, the brick walls will be finished with gypsum board and the wood wainscoting will be replicated (using extant wainscoting in the basement as a template) and installed in public areas. Baseboards, door casings, and trim damaged by sandblasting will be removed and replaced with exact replicas in public areas and simplified replicas in secondary spaces. Partition walls will be removed, restoring most rooms to their original configuration. The ceiling of the large central hall on the main floor will be restored to its original appearance, including box beams and cornices. The wood floors will be retained and refinished. The east and west tiled entry floors and wood-paneled ceilings will be retained and repaired as necessary.

Site

The Oquirrh School fronts on 400 East and is situated on a flat lot. The building is separated from the street by a concrete sidewalk, a grass parking strip, and rectangular lawns on either side of a concrete walkway leading to the east entrance. The lawns have been planted with trees that date to the 1970s and are approaching maturity. The north and south property lines have larger trees that may be original to the site. The north side of the building is flanked by a paved asphalt driveway that leads to a paved asphalt parking lot on the west side of the property. The west side of the building is separated from the lot by small lawns and trees. The south side of the building is flanked by asphalt pavement on the west half and lawns on the east half. The lot is somewhat larger than it was originally due to a number of boundary adjustments and easements in recent years that have expanded the parking lot and provided access to the lot from the west.

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Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

The Oquirrh School was originally situated on a lot of about 1.6 acres, near the center of a residential block with row houses to the south and a church and single-family residences to the north.³ By 1903, trees had been planted on both sides of the sidewalk on the east elevation, what appears to be concrete flatwork leading to the east entrance was in place, triangular portions of lawn were fenced off, and an unpaved driveway on the north side of the building provided access to the rear of the lot.⁴ In the northwest corner of the original lot, a manual building was constructed between 1898 and 1911 and was presumably used for classes in domestic and industrial arts; it was converted to a kindergarten sometime between 1927 and 1950, and demolished by 1961.⁵

³ Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1898.

⁴ Shipler Photograph Collection, Photograph no. 22839 (1903), Utah State Historical Society.

⁵ Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1898, 1911, and 1911 (corrected to 1927, 1950, and 1961).

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Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Oquirrh School, constructed in 1894 and located in Salt Lake City, Utah, is locally significant under Criteria A and C, with a period of significance dating from 1894 to 1958. Under Criterion A, it is significant as a representational example of the schoolhouses constructed as a result of the education reforms and development of the public school system that accompanied Utah's campaign for statehood in the 1890s. Reforms included the consolidation of school districts, the adoption of a statewide curriculum and the construction of numerous unified schoolhouses. The Oquirrh School was one of the first to be built and as such embodies the earliest ideologies and practices of public education in Utah. Its eventual closure and adaptive reuse as an office complex reflect the decline in residential population and increasing urbanization that occurred in the heart of Salt Lake City throughout the 20th century. The Oquirrh School is also significant under Criterion C because it was one of the first public schools built in Salt Lake City and is an excellent example of late Victorian institutional architecture implementing a combination of the Romanesque and Second Renaissance Revival styles. The school can also be considered the work of a master, namely the regionally prominent architect Richard K. A. Kletting, who also designed several emblematic Utah buildings: Saltair Bathing Pavilion, the Salt Palace, and most notably the Utah State Capitol Building (NRHP listed 10/11/1978). Although Kletting designed at least ten other Salt Lake City schools between 1892 and 1912, the Oquirrh School is the only one that was not demolished as the public school system continued to grow and replace outmoded school buildings. The Oquirrh School is being rehabilitated as part of a federal tax credit project and is a contributing historic building in Salt Lake City.

Education in Utah

The Oquirrh School is significant in the background of education in Utah. A thorough contextual history of education in the state was prepared for the National Register nomination form of the now-demolished Webster School (NRHP listed 12/28/2000, de-listed 4/28/2005) and is excerpted here.

In July 1847, the Mormon pioneers settled the Great Salt Lake Valley. During the late 1840s, settlement and survival took priority over education. Mormon settlers in Utah established small and often seasonal ward schools. Private, informal schools were hastily organized and held in private homes and meeting houses. Early education was inadequate due to the difficult environmental conditions, the inability of families to pay tuition and the lack of formal teacher training. The curriculum was limited to very basic reading, mathematics and Mormon religious teachings.

In 1851, the Provisional State of Deseret structured regions into school districts. Under this organization each community was empowered to create as many schools as needed. The Territorial School Law of 1852 organized school districts. These districts maintained existing

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school buildings (private homes and meeting houses) through taxation. Unfortunately, taxes under this legislation were rarely levied and funds remained inconsistent between districts. The relative effectiveness of districts varied dramatically, according to the abilities of teachers and the financial means of local residents and trustees. The non-Mormon churches in Utah saw this as an opportunity to proselytize Mormon children. Beginning in the late 1860s and early 1870s, these churches offered free schools with professionally trained teachers.

During the development of the district schools, mission boards from the Congregational, Presbyterian, and Methodist churches established approximately one hundred private elementary and secondary schools (Powell 1994: 154). Initially these schools were popular with families of all religions, but Mormon leaders became alarmed by the influence of the secular teachings of these schools and Mormon parents gradually withdrew their children. Eventually, the territorial legislators (who belonged to the Mormon Church) decided to create a public school system that would not expose their young to non-Mormon teachings. The result was a system of Mormon schools, or academies, established in each stake (similar to a diocese) of the Mormon Church. This system reached into the surrounding states with twenty-two schools in all.

In 1869, [Mormon] ward schools became district public schools. The new school system established a centralized school policy and curriculum. The 1878 "permanent school fund" distributed tax-collected funds to all school districts (Antrie 1982). Eventually, church-oriented public schools became the inner framework of the federally mandated, locally supported territorial district schools. The accommodation reached between Mormon and federal government leaders in 1890 included the abandonment of polygamy and the establishment of a free public school system. The Free Public School Act of 1890 precipitated the collection of taxes in earnest, consolidated districts according to counties, established a state administration and curriculum, and made attendance compulsory (prior to this legislation only 27.5 percent of children between 8 and 16 years attended) (Ellsworth 1985).

The creation of a tax-supported school system had a direct impact on the educational architecture that followed. After 1890 small, individually designed multi-purpose buildings were replaced by large, permanent and uniformly designed, single-purpose schools. Architects hired by the state or local school districts engineered standardized buildings.

State officials strictly controlled the approval of design, construction cost, and space allocation as illustrated by the 1908 Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The report states, "if cost of a schoolhouse exceeds \$500, plans and specifications must be submitted and approved by the Commissioner of Education." The approval of plans depended on compliance regarding very specific requirements. For example "at least fifteen square feet of floor space and two hundred cubic feet of air space for each pupil to be accommodated in study or [recitation] room therein. Provision is made therein for assuring at least 30 feet of pure air every minute for each pupil and the facilities for exhausted vitiated air. The low percent of attendants through 1907

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Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

through 1908 is due in measure to the contagious diseases, which prevailed during the year” (Nelson 1908: 15).

During the 1907 and 1908 schoolhouse construction boom, 48 public schoolhouses were erected in Utah at a cost of \$709,152.95. The average cost to purchase land, materials and construction [to] build a single schoolhouse was \$14,774 (Goodenham 1977) (Wirthlin and Tully 2000).

Between 1894 and 1915, most towns received one to two brick schoolhouses. To meet the demands of greater population in Salt Lake City, many more schools were constructed and were typically larger and correspondingly more costly.

History of the Oquirrh School

In 1890, the Salt Lake City schools were consolidated into a single district with boundaries identical to those of the city. A Board of Education was organized in the same year to take over the twenty-two ward schools and establish a single public school system for the city. Richard Kletting was the primary architect retained by the district to design a series of large, eclectic school buildings, and his Washington School (1892) and Jackson School (1892) were two of the earliest to be constructed. The Oquirrh School (1894) was another early project, and was named for the mountains along the west side of the Salt Lake Valley. (“Oquirrh” is variously translated as a Goshute Indian word meaning “wooded mountain” or a Piute Indian word meaning “shining mountains.”)

The Board of Education purchased the Oquirrh School site from William and Priscilla Riter on July 1, 1892, for \$16,000. The Riter family had lived on the block since at least 1869, although it is unclear if a home or other structure was on the property when it was sold. Construction proceeded apace, and when the Oquirrh School opened its doors on September 10, 1894, the *Daily Tribune* proclaimed it “the handsomest yet erected under the direction of the Board of Education. Materials and workmanship are of the highest standard... [and the Board of Education] is as proud of the building as a boy is of his first pair of boots.” The school was constructed on a much larger and grander scale than the average Utah school and cost \$56,859. The interior was divided into 15 large classrooms, each opening onto spacious halls. Each class had two adjoining cloakrooms, and there were also five recitation rooms and a library. The original lavatories were in the basement, as was the furnace room. A principal and sixteen teachers were employed at the school to teach grades one through eight; average enrollment was 664 students.

By 1898, the Oquirrh School was situated on a block with a strong mixed-use character. On the lot to the north was the English Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity; to the south was Ouray Place, a series of attached one-story dwellings. Older single-family residences, many of them adobe or wood-framed, dominated the eastern side of the block, while two other large, brick institutional buildings, the Church of Christ-Scientist and Hammond Hall (a day and boarding school) were located on the north side of the block. A number of lots remained undeveloped and were probably used for pasturage and family gardens.

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Between 1898 and 1903, a two-story addition was constructed on the south side of the building, probably to house new lavatories. The compatibility of the addition with the original structure, as well as its early date, indicate that Kletting was most likely the architect. Also at this time, a one-story, brick "Manual Training" building was added at the northwest corner of the school lot; by 1950 the building was relabeled a kindergarten and by 1961 the auxiliary building had been demolished.

In Salt Lake City, school construction continued at a rapid pace until about 1912. Another wave of construction occurred in the 1930s as part of federal relief programs designed to mitigate the economic and social hardships of the Great Depression. The city owned 40 schools by 1946; at that time, the Oquirrh School served children living between 100 South and 500 South Streets, bounded by State Street on the west and 600 East Street on the east (Salt Lake Tribune September 1, 1946).

Enrollment in city schools peaked in the 1950s, with a maximum of about 45,000 in 1959,⁶ and a wave of school improvements took place at this time. In 1954 more than \$1 million was spent to renovate 24 "elderly school buildings" in the Salt Lake district. "Antiquated plumbing, crumbling plaster and loose tiling have made toilet rooms in a number of schools practically unusable... But the situation is not difficult to understand when it is remembered that some of the buildings are 50 years old or more" (Salt Lake Tribune August 8, 1954). For the Oquirrh School, \$46,000 was slated to remodel the toilet rooms and install a new boiler. It was probably at this time (or at least prior to 1965) that major changes were made to the south addition: the massive brick chimney was removed from the south end, the graceful secondary entrance was lowered and reconfigured, the pitch of the roof was reduced, and the windows were returned to their full length.⁷

The rapid growth of Salt Lake City after World War II transformed residential neighborhoods close to downtown. Increasing commercialization, in combination with the growth of suburbs and the popularity of suburban living throughout the 1950s and 1960s, led to a decline in private residences in the neighborhood and a corresponding decrease in enrollment at the Oquirrh School. These social and demographic shifts, in combination with the age and obsolescence of the school, led to its closure in 1965. Ironically, the closure of the school was also the agent of its preservation. Most schools constructed in the 1890s and early 1900s that continued in use as neighborhood schools, including all other schools designed by Richard Kletting, were razed between the late 1970s and 2001 to make way for larger, more modern facilities. The new schools were largely designed as long, low, flat-roofed brick structures of one or two stories with relatively few windows, reflecting the changes in educational, technological, and architectural theory and practice that had occurred since Kletting's time.

The Salt Lake City School District retained the Oquirrh School for eight years and used it to house supplemental programs, but in 1973 the property was sold to Oquirrh Associates, a group of private investors.

⁶ By comparison, enrollment in the district today is about 25,000 students.

⁷ Ann K. Stewart, 1977, "Oquirrh Place" contains three attached and undated photographs showing the south addition (one photo c. 1950s and two c. 1977). Also Shieler Photograph Collection, Photograph no. 22839 (1903); Beeman, Collection C-263, Photograph no. 7092 (n.d., c. 1940s-1950); and Anderson, Collection C-400, Photograph no. 17958 (1965), Utah State Historical Society.

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The building was structurally sound but had been condemned because of its poor condition, and major work began under the direction of Enteleki Associates (which in three years was renamed FFKR, a regionally prominent architecture firm) to restore the exterior and adapt the interior for use as offices. On the exterior, bricks were cleaned, trim was painted and a new roof was installed, including several skylights. Interior work was much more radical: plaster and wainscoting were removed from the walls to expose the brick, all woodwork was sandblasted to remove paint and expose the natural wood, and interior spaces were extensively subdivided with glass, wood, and drywall partitions to create office suites. The school has continued in use as an office building until the present. It was recently purchased by the Children's Center, a private, nonprofit agency providing mental health care for Utah children. The Children's Center is currently undertaking a major restoration of the exterior and a renovation the interior, including the removal of non-historic partition walls to restore the original classroom configuration to a large extent.

Architecture

The Oquirrh School was designed by Richard Karl August Kletting (1858-1943), an architect credited with a wide range of Utah's significant buildings and eulogized as the "Dean of Utah Architects" at the time of his death.

Kletting, the son of a German railroad builder, spent his early years in railroad camps. As a young man, during summers he learned stonecutting, and at sixteen he became a junior draftsman in the engineering office of the German railroad. After additional drafting work in a city engineer's office he went to Paris to work for a large construction firm. He immigrated to the United States in 1883, visited a number of cities on his trek west, and settled in Salt Lake City, where he was immediately employed. Two years after his arrival he advertised his profession in the *Salt Lake City Directory for 1885*. He designed large commercial buildings, church buildings for the LDS Church, and schools and residences. His most notable achievement was winning the design competition for the Utah State Capitol Building in 1912. Kletting, somewhat of a loner, was best known for his teaching. Aside from training a large number of Utah's future architects in his office, he also taught math and other subjects in his home. He was also credited with cataloging the book collection of the Salt Lake City Public Library. He was an avid conservationist, concerned about Utah's public lands and watershed areas. His interest in conservation was recognized in 1964 when a 12,000-foot peak in the Uinta Mountains was named in his honor (Powell 1994).

After settling in Salt Lake City, Kletting quickly established his practice and began to receive major commissions by 1887, beginning with the Karrick Block and followed shortly by the Utah Commercial Savings Bank building. He continued to receive numerous residential, institutional and commercial commissions, including those for several emblematic Utah structures: the original Saltair bathing resort (1892), the original Salt Palace (1899) (both destroyed by fire), a number of buildings on the President's Circle at the University of Utah, and the Utah State Capitol (1912). Between 1892 and 1912, Kletting also received commissions for a number of public schools in Salt Lake City and elsewhere in the state. Kletting designed at least 10 elementary

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and intermediate schools for the newly-established Salt Lake Board of Education, including Grant (dates uncertain), Lowell (c. 1891, demolished 1980s), Washington (1892, demolished 1975), Jackson (1892, demolished 1980), Oquirrh (1894), Whittier (1900, demolished 2001), Jefferson (1908, demolished 1970s), Riverside (1908, demolished c. 1980s), Ensign (1912, demolished 1979), and Bryant (construction date uncertain, demolished c. 1980s).

Kletting's schools were rectangular, multi-story buildings of massive masonry construction, containing 10 to 15 classrooms arranged symmetrically around large central hallways and graced with high ceilings and numerous tall windows to provide adequate natural light and ventilation. Kletting varied the schools by employing a rich palette of design motifs, beginning with the Late Victorian and ranging through the revival styles of the Eclectic movement, thus mirroring the shift in tastes of the day. The eclecticism of the Oquirrh School is typical of schools constructed nationwide at the turn of the century, as education reforms across the country led to the establishment of public education and the need for a new architecture not only to house an increasingly numerous student body but to embody the new social ideals of adequate education in a healthy environment for all children.

The early Oquirrh School reflects Romanesque and Second Renaissance Revival stylistic influences. In the United States, the Romanesque style was developed and employed by the architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-1886) for both houses and large public buildings in the early 1880s. A monograph on Richardson's life and work was published in 1888; it led to widespread use of the style in the 1890s, mainly for architect-designed landmark buildings due to the expense of construction. The Romanesque style is typified by an asymmetrical façade; heavy masonry construction, usually incorporating rough-faced, squared stonework and multiple masonry colors; windows usually with a single pane of glass per sash; groupings of three or more windows; round-topped arches over windows and entrances; and attached towers, either round, polygonal or squared. At the Oquirrh School, specific Romanesque influences include asymmetry; use of multiple material colors and textures on the exterior; wide, rounded stone arches springing from heavy piers with delicately carved cushion capitals that mark the main entrances; single-pane windows; the vestiges of rectangular towers on the east and west elevations; window groupings in the east tower; and fully pedimented gable ends punctuated by Palladian windows.

But the Romanesque is somewhat subdued by the elements of the Second Renaissance Revival that lend the building a more modern appearance. The Renaissance Revival style is based on the architecture of 16th-century Renaissance Italy and France, with additional elements borrowed from ancient Greek and Roman architecture. The style was popular during two separate phases: the First Renaissance Revival, from about 1840 to 1885, and the Second Renaissance Revival (characterized by larger and more elaborately decorated buildings), from about 1890 to 1935. As with the Romanesque, the Renaissance Revival was best suited for public buildings, commercial buildings, and grand private residences due to the expensive materials required and the elaborate style. Common characteristics of the style include smooth masonry walls with belt courses between floors; variations in window design at each floor; arched, recessed entrances; low-pitched hip roofs, often with rooftop balustrades; and broadly overhanging, boxed eaves, often with decorative brackets. Specific Second Renaissance elements of the Oquirrh School include simplified massing; smooth, non-rusticated wall surfaces;

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relatively uniform, hierarchical window treatments from floor to floor; arched, recessed entrances; and low, hipped roofs with wide, boxed eaves and brackets.

Conclusion

The solid, formal, imposing schools designed by Kletting and other architects of the period helped to make permanent the public education movement in Utah and the nation, and were the physical embodiment of the Salt Lake City school system until the 1970s. The Oquirrh School is an excellent representative of this period of establishment and growth of public education in Utah, and is one of the only remaining examples of an early public schoolhouse in Salt Lake City. Its eventual closure and adaptive reuse as an office complex reflect the decline in residential population and increasing urbanization that occurred in the heart of Salt Lake City throughout the 20th century. Thus it is significant under Criterion A because it is associated with events that have contributed to the broad patterns of educational and social history in Utah and the nation.

The Oquirrh School is also significant under Criterion C because it was one of the first public schools built in Salt Lake City, and one of the last remaining, and is an excellent example of the adaptation of Late Victorian styles to serve a new purpose. As such, it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the new architecture of public education that developed during the latter half of the 19th century. The school also embodies the early ideas and theories of a master, Richard K. A. Kletting, arguably the most prominent architect in Utah of his time who also designed several emblematic Utah buildings: Saltair Bathing Pavilion, the Salt Palace, and the Utah State Capitol, among others. Kletting designed at least ten other Salt Lake City schools between 1892 and 1912, and the Oquirrh School is the only one that was not demolished as the public school system continued to grow and modernize.

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Section No. PHOTOS Page 1

Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Common Label Information:

1. Oquirrh School
2. Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah
3. Photographer: Anne Oliver
4. Date: 19 December 2007
5. Negatives on file at Utah SHPO.

Photo No. 1:

6. East elevation of building. Camera facing west.



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Section No. PHOTOS Page 2

Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Photo No. 2:

6. North elevation of building. Camera facing southeast.



Photo No. 3:

6. West elevation of building. Camera facing east.



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Section No. PHOTOS Page 3

Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Photo No. 4:

6. South elevation of building. Camera facing northeast.



Photo No. 5:

6. East elevation of building. Camera facing west.



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Section No. PHOTOS Page 4

Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Photo No. 6:

6. North & west elevations of building. Camera facing southeast.



Photo No. 7:

6. West & south elevations of building. Camera facing northeast.



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Section No. PHOTOS Page 5

Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Photo No. 8:

6. South elevation of building. Camera facing northeast.



Photo No. 9:

6. South elevation of building. Camera facing northwest.



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Oquirrh School, Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, UT

Photo No. 10:

6. Interior, tile floor in east entryway. Camera facing north.

